

Dr. Stokes as an original thinker and philosopher, they have seen how he discerns genius in the plainest common sense of St. Columba; how he decries Teutonic genius in abolishing all laws that are not efficiently carried out, instead of devising measures for their execution. Our readers have discovered too, that Dr. Stokes's want of learning extends beyond his confession in his preface. He admitted there he was not qualified to deal with the recondite mysteries of ancient dialects or well-nigh illegible manuscripts! We have not tried him in the Brehon Laws themselves or in Anglo-Saxon documents, we have tried him in the Latin and English books he himself quoted and found him ignorant of his Maine and Bede. As a thinker and reader we have come to know him. It only remains to become acquainted with him as a pleader, to investigate the cogency and fairness of his method, when he engages in an argument. Two or three examples will abundantly suffice.

Here, as elsewhere, he is the war correspondent, but here he is the war correspondent established comfortably in one of the two opposite camps. His plan is to put forward the views of his own camp, to say little of those on the other side, and to say that little contemptuously, sometimes genially and sometimes sharply, but always with an air of self-satisfied superiority. It is well-known that St. Columbanus wrote letters to the Holy See. This saint appears to have taken for his model the Apostle of the Gentiles rather than St. John the Evangelist. He is abrupt, fervid, extreme in praise and bold in depreciation. He addresses a famous letter to Pope Boniface IV., as "Pulcherrimo omnium Europae ecclesiarum Capiti, Papae praedilecto, praetito prae-suli, pastorum pastori." He speaks in it as follows, in the name of Irishmen. "As I have already said, we are attached to the Chair of St. Peter, and although Rome is great and renowned, yet with us it is great and distinguished only on account of that Chair. Through the two Apostles of Christ we are almost celestial, and Rome is the head of the churches of the world." At the same time, to use the words of Lanigan, "he writes with great freedom, and is particularly severe against the memory of Pope Vigilius, whom he supposes to have prevaricated from his duty." "Vigila," he exclaims, "quia forte non bene vigilavit Vigilius." Dr. Stokes taking no notice whatever of St. Columbanus's testimonies of respect for Popes, remarks that he uses "plain language to them which no priest of the Roman obedience would now dare to use," and, after some quotations, jauntily closes his lecture with the observation, "I do not think that the reverence of Columbanus for the Pope or his belief in papal infallibility can have been very great, when he would use such language." Montalembert like an honest critic gave both sides of St. Columbanus's letters, and like a genuine critic endeavoured to reconcile them and point out the precise views and feelings of the one common author. The task was essentially philosophical, it had its difficulties, but we believe the great Frenchman was not unsuccessful. Dr. Stokes finds this proceeding "very amusing." The whole thing he tells us "has been a great crux for modern Ultramontanes." He takes care to find no "crux" in it himself, for he gives the evidence only in one direction.

He deals with O'Curry much as with Montalembert. O'Curry undertook to show from the *Book of Leinster* that Cormac M'Cullinane was not a married bishop, and he did so in rather a dry and uninteresting fashion. Dr. Stokes tells us that it is very funny to read O'Curry on this subject, but gives only a vague reference, and does not enter into O'Curry's statements. The exact reference is *MS. Materials*, page 132, and we envy the buoyancy of the reader who will find it fun to read.

On the subject of the primal succession of Armagh, our professor is fiercely, not jovially, contemptuous. He coolly describes the statement that the See was sometimes filled by inferior clerics, not priests or bishops, as a "device." He does not believe in such inferior clerics being advanced to Sees. We suppose he never heard of Fenelon's Sermon on the Consecration of the Elector of Cologne, a cleric who legally obtained that great See without being a priest, and feeling the gross imperfection of his position, embraced all ecclesiastical obligations, and after years of incumbency was promoted to Holy Orders. Dr. Stokes is, however, not bound to be acquainted with French literature. But we might have hoped he would have seen in Cambrensis, at least, that such clerics were not a device or imagination. Cambrensis even tells us how they dressed. They wore no swords, and they preserved large tonsures on their heads, although otherwise they allowed their long locks to grow freely. They thus, we see, retained a certain openly ecclesiastical position, and might, in many respects, act with authority even as mediators and as patrons: though debarred of course from every exercise of purely priestly powers, and free to marry, they enjoyed, he tells us, ecclesiastical immunity. As Dr. Stokes evidently knows as little of Cambrensis as of Bede, we beg to present him here with the reference to the *Locus Classicus* on this point, a point which he has termed with equal ignorance and incivility a "device." The *Locus is Topographia Hibernica*, Dist. III., cap. xxvi., sub finem.

We have now done with our professor. His book is not an honour to the University of Dublin nor to himself. We do not indeed forget his explanation of the two-fold difficulty he lay under, obliged to cater for a voluntary class and obliged to cater for publishers, while neither the voluntary class nor the publishers were to be won by erudition. Perhaps Trinity College may help to remove the first part of the difficulty, and prevent Dr. Stokes from being deserted by his audience, if he begins to lecture in a really learned way. As for the second part of the difficulty, we have now done as much as we well can to convert the publishers and convince them that the reading public is not likely to be very favourably impressed by such a book as Dr. Stokes has just provided.

THE SCHOOLMASTER AT HOME

Home Education. A course of Lectures to Ladies, delivered in Bradford, in the Winter of 1885-86. By Charlotte M. Mason. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.

Books on the art of education designed for school-masters and school-mistresses are many in number, and are of various orders of merit. A book on the same important subject

addressed to parents, and especially to mothers, is somewhat of a novelty in pedagogic literature. We do not say that there has been any lack of good counsel to parents, warning them of their duty to their children. Of this there has been an ample supply. But the counsel thus furnished enforced, for the most part, the moral obligations of the parent towards the child, rather than explained the manner in which these obligations might be best fulfilled. It is well to warn parents that they are bound to protect their children against the risk of moral infections, to form in them sound habits of body, of intellect, and of will. But a very important complement of this good advice is to tell them how these habits can best be formed, and how the most may be made of the constitution of body or mind with which their child has been endowed. Now it is not everyone who is competent to instruct them in this matter. The development of the energies of the body follows definite natural laws which it requires some study to master, and some skill to apply. And the mind too has its laws of growth, definite indeed, but intricate withal, and requiring most careful study if they are to be made the basis of useful practical effort. It is not everyone who can safely advise parents how they may best secure the growth of vigorous habits of body in their children; to offer sound advice on this topic an accurate knowledge of physiological law is indispensable. Nor is it everyone who can give them trustworthy advice as to the formation of right habits of mind in their children. No one who is not conversant with the principles of inductive psychology is competent to give counsel in the matter. In fact, parents would do well to exact a great deal more than well-intentioned zeal from the advisers who address them on the education of their children. Having assured themselves that the counsel offered them is based on the morality of the Gospel, and that it is designed to form their children to a Christian ideal, they may usefully proceed to insist that their instructors shall show a competent acquaintance with the natural laws, which affect organic body and spiritual mind, and shall suggest only such methods as are based upon these laws. Thus much, we are of opinion, should be required from anyone who comes forward with advice as to educational methods. We know few writers who adequately satisfy these obvious requirements. In Miss Mason's work we have evidence that the author has abundantly qualified herself competently to instruct and advise parents as to the education of their children, and we, therefore, venture to commend it with a cordiality which we would not bestow on any other similar work with which we are acquainted. We recommend the book not to parents only, but to all who are concerned with the education of the young. The early chapter of Miss Mason's book deal with the education of young children of both sexes, and may be usefully studied by all whose duty it is to watch over and to assist in the formation of the infant mind, whether within the circle of home, or in the convent, or preparatory collegiate school, where mistresses and masters are called on to take the parents' place. The closing lecture in which Miss Mason discusses the methods to be employed with girls who have reached the verge of womanhood, would, we feel assured, form useful practical reading for every mistress in our boarding schools, and

furnish them with practical suggestions, which they would find frequent occasion to employ.

Miss Mason's ideal, to which she would have the mind and character of the child moulded, is essentially Christian. In fact she finds the fundamental laws of right education stated in the New Testament, and her own suggestions are no more than certain eminently skilful applications of these laws.

"Take heed that ye offend not—Despise not—Hinder not one of these little ones. So run the three educational laws of the New Testament which, when separately examined, appear to me to cover all the help we can give the children, and all the harm we can save them from; that is, whatever is included in training up a child in the way he should go." We give an example of Miss Mason's detailed interpretation of the first of these laws.

"'Naughty,' says the mother, again, when a little hand is thrust into the sugar-bowl; and a pair of roguish eyes seek hers furtively to measure, as they do unerringly, how far the little pilferer may go. It is very amusing; the mother 'cannot help laughing'; and the little trespasser is allowed to pass, and what the poor mother has not thought of, an offence, a cause of stumbling, has been cast into the path of her two-years-old child. He has learned already that that which is 'naughty' may yet be done with impunity and he goes on improving his knowledge. . . .

Where is the beginning of this tangle, spoiling the lives of parent and child alike? In this: that the mother began with no sufficient sense of duty; she thought herself free to allow and disallow, to say and unsay, at pleasure, as if the child were hers to do what she liked with. The child has never discovered a back ground of *must* behind his mother's decisions; he does not know that she *must not* let him break his sister's playthings, gorge himself with cake, spoil the pleasure of other people, because these things are not *right*. Let the child perceive that his parents are law-compelled as well as he, that they simply cannot allow him to do the things which have been forbidden, and he submits with the sweet meekness which belongs to his age."

The Gospel precept forbidding us to *hinder* children Miss Mason finds violated by all these methods which tend to dwarf the child in body or mind, or to obstruct its due development, physical or mental. In this connexion she lays down some important principles regarding the preservation of children in bodily health, which parents and boarding-school managers might study with advantage.

As a motive to induce the Christian Educator to study every phase of natural law which bears upon his task and can help him to fulfil it, Miss Mason makes the following very significant remark:

"It is a shame to believing people that many whose highest profession is that they do not know, and therefore do not believe, should produce more blameless lives, freer from flaws of temper, from the vice of selfishness, than do many sincerely religious people. It is a fact that will confront the children bye-and-bye, and one of which they will require an explanation; and what is more, it is a fact that will have more weight, should it confront them in the person of a character, which they cannot but esteem and love, than all the doctrinal teaching they have had in their

lives. This appears to me the threatening danger to that confessed dependence upon and allegiance to Almighty God, which we recognize as religion—not the wickedness but the *goodness* of a school which refuses to admit any such dependence and allegiance."

Miss Mason explains this difference, where it is found, by the very obvious circumstance that the unbelieving teacher has made a study of the *natural* laws that mould human mind and character, and by carefully applying them has produced an abundant growth of *natural* virtues; whereas the religious teacher, though he has been careful of his pupils' supernatural interests, has neglected the natural laws which perfect nature in its own order, and so has left his pupil to compare unfavourably with the man in whom nature has been perfected by well-contrived methods adapted to her laws. As Miss Mason explains it: "The non-believer, who looks for no supernatural aids, lays himself out to discover and conform to all the laws which regulate natural life—physical, mental, moral; all the laws of God, in fact, excepting those of the spiritual life which the believer appropriates as his peculiar inheritance." In the work under notice, she undertakes to call attention to those natural laws which, even in the most religiously conducted education, cannot be disregarded with impunity—"to sketch out roughly a method of education which as resting upon a basis of natural law, may look, without presumption, to inherit the divine blessing."

We have not space to follow her through the details of her task. But we advise all for whom her subject possesses an interest to do this for themselves. Her remarks on out-of-door life for children, on the formation of habits, physical, intellectual and moral, and on the training of the conscience cannot fail to present the parent and teacher with new views of duty, and open up new possibilities of good. Miss Mason is not only a diligent student of psychology, she is furthermore an acute and painstaking observer of character, and has caught with precision, and portrays with fidelity the varying mental phases through which the child passes during its progress to mature age. These varying peculiarities suggest rules for parental guidance, which appear to us admirably conceived, and as admirably expressed. She does not profess to be able to follow boys beyond the early stages of their development, but she claims to know the phases of the girlish mind at every period of its growth, and as far as we may presume to judge, her claim is well founded, and the value of her advice is proportioned to her knowledge. The following extract will serve to show with what care she has studied the habits of mind of the ordinary school-girl, and will, we trust, induce parents and teachers who may read this to consult her work for themselves:—

"Girls are, on the whole, worse off than boys as regards what they get out of school life. There is an element of generosity, of free and friendly 'give and take' in boys' games which is wanting to the girls. Beautiful and lasting girl friendships are formed in most schools; but girls do not always do each other good; perhaps because they are more delicate, nervous, and consequently irritable, by organization than boys, they often contrive to get the worst and not the best out of each other. They have not the common bond

which boys find in their games, and their alliances rest upon talk, which too often turns into gossip, possibly into unwholesome gossip."

And then follows the moral for the teacher. "Because girls constitutionally sensitive are open to the small annoyances, jealousies, 'cliquishness,' which hinder them from getting all the good they could out of each other's society, they are the more dependent on the character of their head, and on the opportunities of getting touch with her. If she be a woman of clear and vigorous mind, high principle, and elevated character, it is astonishing how all that is lovely in the feminine character is drawn towards her as by a magnet, and the girls mould themselves, each according to her own nature, yet each after the type of her mistress."

Miss Mason's sketch of the young lady who has just returned "finished" to the bosom of her family, is equally well drawn, and her suggestions to the girl's parents equally judicious.

"She is not an interesting companion at present, poor child! Her talk is full of 'oh's,' 'well's,' 'you know's.' She has many unreasoning enthusiasms and aversions, and these are her opinions, such as they are. She has brought some little knowledge out of the school-room, but this appears to do little towards giving her soundness of judgment. Her affections are as lawless as her opinions; all the emotional sentiment in her is bestowed on some outsider, girl or woman friend most likely, while the people who have claims on her are overlooked royally. So of her moral sense: duties she acknowledges, and will move heaven and earth to fulfil them—overstrained loyalty to a friend, excessive religious observance perhaps; while she is comically blind to duty as her elders see it; has small scruples about disobedience, evasions, even deliberate fibs. She could do great things in a great cause, so she thinks, but the trivial round, the common task, afford her occasions for stumbling. She likes to talk about herself—what she feels, thinks, purposes, and her talk is pathetic, as showing how far she is in the dark as to the nature of the *self* about which her thoughts are playing curiously."

We cannot permit ourselves to quote further from Miss Mason's pages. But we trust the extracts we have made will suffice to convince those who are concerned to fulfil with intelligence and success the educational functions of parent or teacher, that they will find in these eight lectures much to aid them in their critical task.

EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION?

The Fifty-third Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year 1886: Dublin, 1887.

The Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have laid before Parliament, by command of her Majesty, an account of another year's working of the great organisation over which they preside. Their financial statement comes down to the end of the month of March of the present year. What we may describe as the scholastic returns deal with the twelve months ending December 31st, 1886. There are many points in the Report to which attention might usefully